



# News Release

## WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Army National Guard now offering increased bonuses for new and re-enlisting soldiers**

Army National Guard members can now get a reenlistment bonus of as much as \$15,000, and new enlistees are eligible for bonuses of up to \$10,000. The increased bonuses are earmarked for new Guard soldiers who have never served in uniform, for people who join the Army Guard after serving on active duty, and for Guard soldiers who agree to reenlist for three or six years.

The bonuses reflect the Guard's need to keep good soldiers and add new ones, according to the commander of the Wisconsin Army National Guard.

"Every soldier here in Wisconsin is important," said Brig. Gen. Kerry Denson. "They play a critical role here in Wisconsin and in the defense of our nation, and we value their service."

At the end of 2004, Wisconsin's Army Guard strength stood at about 96 percent, with some 300 job openings available, Denson said.

The new \$15,000 bonus, triple the previous amount, applies to eligible soldiers re-enlisting for six years, while those who extend their service by three years will receive \$7,500. The \$10,000 bonus for new enlistments applies to men and women who enlist in career fields the Army needs most, including truck drivers, medics, food servers, military police, infantrymen and field artillery.

In addition to cash enlistment bonuses and regular pay for drill weekends, annual training, and periods of active duty, Guard members can avail themselves of up to \$70,000 in educational benefits including the Montgomery GI Bill, the Wisconsin Tuition Assistance Program, the federal Student Loan Repayment Program, and other benefits. Army National Guard recruiters in 67 Wisconsin communities can provide full details.

The increased bonuses are an effort to improve the Army Guard's recruiting and retention efforts during the global war on terrorism and build the Army Guard back up to its authorized nationwide strength of 350,000 troops, which include about 7,700 Army Guard soldiers authorized in Wisconsin.

— more —

Those who join the Army Guard's enlisted ranks who still have a military service obligation following their active duty tours will be eligible for a \$50 bonus for each remaining month of their obligation. They can then receive a \$15,000 bonus if they reenlist in the Guard.

In Washington, the National Guard Bureau chief, Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, said the Guard will also change its recruiting message to more accurately reflect the fact that many citizen-soldiers are now pulling tours of overseas duty or supporting critical homeland defense missions here at home.

"We are correcting, frankly, some of our recruiting themes and slogans to reflect the reality of today," Blum said. "We're not talking about one weekend a month and two weeks a year and college tuition. We're talking about service to the nation."

People interested in obtaining more information about the increased bonuses can call or visit their nearest Army National Guard recruiter.

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